

# THE MILITANT

INSIDE

**'Cuban Five' prisoners' art inspired by 'just cause'**  
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A SOCIALIST NEWSWEEKLY PUBLISHED IN THE INTERESTS OF WORKING PEOPLE

VOL. 74/NO. 32 AUGUST 23, 2010

## U.S. bosses press wage cuts amid joblessness

BY ANGEL LARISCY

While unemployment remains at high levels, those working are being pressed into accepting wage cuts.

July's labor figures show that employers are doing little hiring, while increasing productivity through speedup and lowering wages. While the official unemployment rate in July was 9.5 percent, the actual unemployment and underemployment rate is 16.5 percent. This includes job seekers who haven't looked for work in the past month and those forced to accept part-time jobs.

For some time local and state governments, as well as private employers, have been imposing furloughs and shorter hours to reduce labor costs and squeeze as much as they can from workers. But now the trend is to cut wages.

Local and state governments, which have eliminated 102,000 jobs in the past three months, are leading the push to cut wages. A 2010 survey by the National League of Cities revealed that 51 percent of cities responding said they had cut or frozen employees' wages. Union con-

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## Restrictions eased on air strikes in Afghanistan

BY BRIAN WILLIAMS

Gen. David Petraeus, commander of U.S.-led forces in Afghanistan, announced adjustments in rules of engagement for U.S. military operations in Afghanistan. His directive loosens restrictions on artillery and air attacks put in place by Gen. Stanley McChrystal, the former U.S. commander, while reaffirming the same basic strategy.

What Washington calls its counterinsurgency strategy focuses on clearing Taliban combatants and their allies from populated areas, sending in enough troops to hold these centers, and using material incentives to win support from the population.

The specifics of Petraeus's August 1 order are classified, but the military has released small portions of it to the media. Before using firepower, "the commander approving the strike must determine that no civilians are present," Petraeus wrote. "If unable to assess the risk of civilian presence, fires are prohibited" with two exceptions, the details of which were not released

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## Prominent unionists back the Cuban Five

Steelworkers host meeting in Toronto



Militant/Rosemary Ray

Event in solidarity with Cuban Five at United Steelworkers hall in Toronto August 8. From left to right: Jack Layton, leader of the New Democratic Party in Canada; Olga Salanueva, wife of Cuban Five prisoner René González; Adriana Pérez, wife of Cuban Five prisoner Gerardo Hernández; and Irma González, daughter of René González.

BY ROSEMARY RAY

TORONTO—Some 150 people filled the United Steelworkers hall here August 8 at a solidarity event for five Cuban revolutionaries imprisoned in the United States for nearly 12 years. The event was hosted by the United Steelworkers of Canada; Workers Uniting, an association of United Steelworkers in Canada and the United States and the Unite union in the United Kingdom and Ireland; Worker to Worker Canada-Cuba; and the Toronto Forum on Cuba. Speakers on the panel described the growing in-

ternational movement calling for their release. The featured speakers of the evening were three family members of the five Cubans in U.S. jails.

Gerardo Hernández, Ramón Labañino, René González, Antonio Guerrero, and Fernando González were arrested in September 1998. Since then, they have been unjustly held in U.S. prisons on a variety of trumped-up charges of which they were convicted in June 2001 and given draconian sentences. Charges include both acting as an unregistered foreign agent

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## N.Y. socialist candidate files for ballot status



Militant/Angel Lariscy

NEW YORK, August 10—Róger Calero (center), Socialist Workers Party candidate for Congress in District 15, at New York Board of Elections office filing petitions with more than 6,700 signatures to gain ballot status in the November elections. Two New York SWP candidates for U.S. Senate—Ruth Robinett (left), and Willie Cotton (third from left)—and two campaign supporters accompany him.

After filing the petitions, Calero and his supporters campaigned in Harlem talking with workers about the shooting rampage by New York police at a neighborhood party August 8. (See article on this page.)

Calero said, "My campaign demands the arrest, prosecution, and punishment of the cops responsible for the fatal shooting of Luis Soto and the wounding of four others in Harlem." Two cops were wounded in addition to the four shot at the party. Calero's working-class campaign received a welcome response from neighborhood residents as they stopped to meet the candidate.

—RUTH ROBINETT

## 1 killed, 4 wounded in cops' shooting rampage in N.Y.C.

BY WILLIE COTTON

NEW YORK—Some 350 people turned out for a meeting in Harlem August 10 to voice their concern about a shooting rampage by New York police two days earlier. The meeting was called by the National Action Network. It was addressed by Rev. Al Sharpton, the organization's president, and by city and police officials.

Early morning Sunday, August 8, four cops fired a fusillade of 46 bullets outside a block party killing Luis Soto, critically wounding Angel Alvarez, and wounding three others. Two cops were also hit by police gunfire. City officials, capitalist politicians, and the police have been working overtime since the shootings to defuse outrage over the killing and wounding of people in Harlem.

Organizers of the Harlem meeting sought to divert attention of the crowd away from centering on the shooting by the cops, placing more of the blame on general violence. But many at the meet-

ing were incensed by the officers' brutality.

"What happened shouldn't happen like that. It is too much," Iris, a bartender and Harlem resident, told the *Militant*. "If this happened to Diallo and Bell, why does it keep happening?" She was

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# Black farmers say, ‘It’s discrimination again’

BY SUSAN LAMONT

WASHINGTON—The U.S. Senate adjourned for a month August 5 without approving funds to pay Black farmers for long-standing claims of discrimination by the United States Department of Agriculture (USDA). Without Senate approval, the \$1.25 billion promised to Black farmers in February by President Barack Obama won’t be paid, although the U.S. House of Representatives approved the funding in May.

Also included in the failed measure was \$3.4 billion to settle a lawsuit by Native Americans for royalties owed them by the federal government from land held “in trust.”

Black farmers have been demanding the federal government address the failure to provide compensation to farmers for USDA discrimination in loans and other farms programs, as agreed in the settlement of the 1999 *Pigford v. Glickman* class-action lawsuit. In addition, thousands of Black farmers had their claims denied in the original lawsuit because they weren’t informed about the filing deadline or for other reasons.

Willie Russell, 68, is one of the farmers who missed the original deadline. He grows peas, watermelon, and other crops on land that belonged to his father near the small town of Eufaula in southeastern Alabama.

“Why is this taking so long?” he said in an August 9 phone interview with the *Militant*. “To tell the truth, I think it’s discrimination against us all over again. They approve billions of dollars for all kinds of things, why not for this.”

“They’re thinking about their own pocketbooks and keeping everybody else down if they can,” said Uzzell Barnes, 74, a farmer from Johnston County, North Carolina, in an interview printed in the *Yankton, South Dakota Press & Dakotan*.

This was the seventh time the Senate refused to pass the funding. While Democrats blame Republicans for failure to pass the measure, National Black Farmers Association president John Boyd said, “I think one party is just as responsible as the other.”

## U.S. gov’t restricts citizens’ right to an attorney

BY SETH GALINSKY

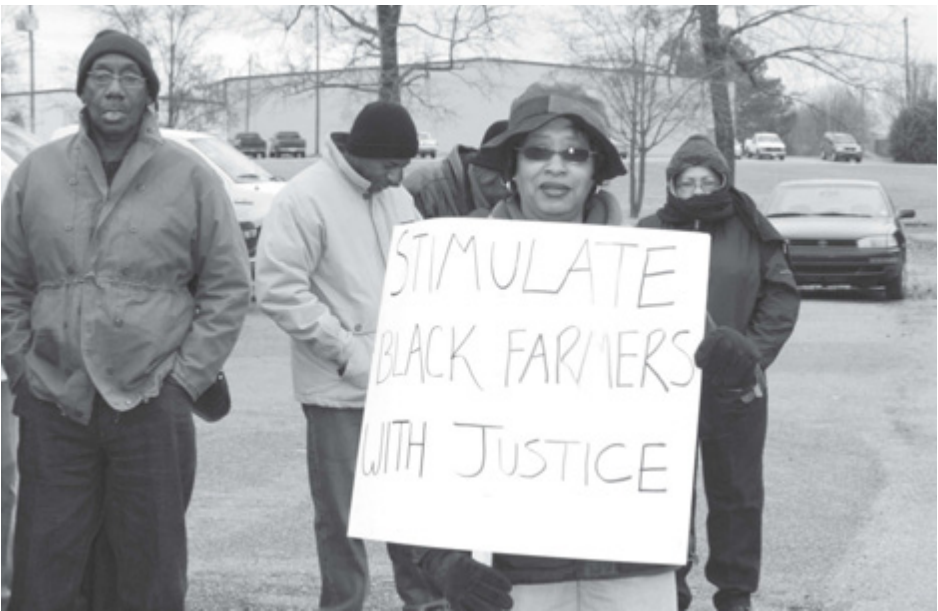
Can the U.S. government deny a U.S. citizen the constitutional right to an attorney by labeling that person a terrorist? Can the government target a U.S. citizen for assassination?

The White House says it can.

On July 16, while lawyers were preparing a legal challenge to the Barack Obama administration’s public order authorizing the killing of Muslim cleric Anwar al-Awlaki, a U.S. citizen born in New Mexico, the U.S. Treasury Department declared that he is a “specially designated global terrorist.”

Under Treasury Department rules, attorneys who planned to file a lawsuit on al-Awlaki’s behalf would be subject to criminal prosecution—unless they were granted a license from the Treasury Department.

The International Emergency and Economic Powers Act, signed into law in 1977 by President James Carter, put



Courtesy National Black Farmers

Protest in Jackson, Mississippi, February 9 demands redress for government discrimination.

this in place. Following the attack on the World Trade Center in September 2001, President George W. Bush used the act to declare a national emergency.

Al-Awlaki was now officially a “specially designated global terrorist,” under regulations from the Office of Foreign Asset Control (OFAC)—part of the Treasury Department. This meant it was illegal for attorneys to file the legal motions they were preparing to challenge his designation as a terrorist and his addition to the list of people to be killed.

The American Civil Liberties Union and the Center for Constitutional Rights took up the case at the request of Awlaki’s father. They filed suit August 3 against the Treasury Department and OFAC, asking that the court overturn the regulations. Their brief says the rules violate the First and Fifth amendments to the Constitution, which guarantee the right to freedom of speech, to petition the government for redress of grievances, and to due process of law.

The next day the Treasury Department granted the groups a license allowing them to take on Awlaki’s case.

The decision to put Awlaki on the list of people targeted for assassination by the CIA and the U.S. military was made at the highest government levels. Washington claims Awlaki is affiliated to al-Qaeda and says he corresponded with Maj. Nidal Malik Hasan, the U.S Army psychiatrist charged with killing 13 people in Fort Hood, Texas, last November. Al-Awlaki is believed to be living in Yemen.

Washington has often ordered assassinations of its opponents around the world, but it is rare for it to openly declare a U.S. citizen is among its targets.

Like its predecessors, the Obama administration continues to push other measures to restrict the constitutional rights of working people. The *Washington Post* reported July 29 that the White House wants to give the government wider powers to demand e-mail records from Internet companies.

The Electronic Communications Privacy Act currently allows the FBI, the Pentagon, and other government agencies to demand personal data, including records of phone calls, bank records, and library activity, without a court order through a “national security letter.” Recipients of the letters are subject to criminal prosecution if they reveal their contents. According to the *Post*, 192,500 national security letters were issued between 2003 and 2006 alone.

The law currently says that Internet companies must turn over the name, address, length of service, and billing records of their customers, but not “transactional records” such as e-mail addresses.

Marc Zwillinger, an attorney for some Internet companies, said that changing the law would significantly increase information turned over for government surveillance. “A Facebook friend request—is that like a phone call or an e-mail? Is that something they would sweep in under an NSL [national security letter]?” he told the *Post*.

## THE MILITANT

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Militant/John Steele

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Managing Editor: Martín Koppel

Business Manager: Angel Lariscy

Editorial volunteers: Róger Calero, Seth Galinsky, Cindy Jaquith, Angel Lariscy, Omari Musa, Doug Nelson, Jacob Perasso, Brian Williams

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# UK health care, jobs in government firing line

BY JONATHAN SILBERMAN

LONDON—David Cameron, leader of the ruling Conservative Party, launched his party’s campaign in the general election with promises to protect the National Health Service (NHS). “Today, the Conservatives are the party of the NHS,” Cameron said. “I’ll cut the deficit, not the NHS.”

But the 1 million, mostly working people, who use the NHS every day face declining care. The experience of journalist Judith Woods is typical. Writing in the *Daily Telegraph*, Woods who recently sought treatment for a fractured spine, reports: “First I was denied simple pain relief even as I wept and begged for it, then I was forcibly discharged, because I was taking up a precious bed—only to end up in A&E [accident and emergency] at another hospital 24 hours later.”

Now, with a government drive to reduce spending—the £105 billion (US\$165 billion) health budget is one-sixth of total public expenditures—some of the most common operations face the axe. Examples include dying cancer patients told to “manage their own symptoms”; nursing homes for the elderly closed; the number of hospital beds reduced, including those for the mentally ill; pediatric, maternity, and elderly care being cut back; and services that provide breaks for long-term care givers being trimmed. Previously decided health construction programs are to be reviewed.

The measures are the result of government decisions to achieve £20 billion (US\$32 billion) in “efficiency savings” by 2014. A similar proposal was made by the Labour Party when in power.

Tens of thousands of jobs will be cut. Specialist nurses will be forced to do general nursing tasks, endangering specialist care, according to the Royal College of Nursing. Figures published by *The Times* August 6 reveal that 11,000

job cuts have been slated for this year.

Dr. Peter Carter, general secretary of the Royal College of Nursing, warned of the danger of a “return to Maidstone and Tunbridge Wells and Mid Staffs”—hospitals in which hundreds of patients died due to hygiene problems.

Even with a government commitment not to reduce NHS spending, care will decline. Demands of an ageing population require a 6 percent rise in the NHS budget for each of the next three years *just to maintain current care levels*, according to a recent study. Prices for health provision are rising faster than average inflation. Companies take advantage of the state-funded NHS to raise their service and drug charges and rake in superprofits.

Moreover, large chunks of government money invariably lands in the coffers of the bloated bureaucracy that administers the NHS. When the last Labour government expanded the health budget, spending on management staff rose by more than 80 percent in four years.

In face of declining care, local protests have started. A campaign earlier in the year by the Defend Whittington Hospital Coalition won a government reprieve on cutting back services provided at the north London hospital. Hundreds took to the streets to protest proposed cuts, which included the closure of the accident and emergency department and cutbacks to maternity and children’s services.

Protesters called on people to save “our NHS.” The government cuts, however, underscore the fact that the NHS is not *ours*. Workers have no property rights under capitalism.

## NHS: a concession won by workers

The establishment of NHS was won by the working class—one of a series of concessions enacted by the post-WWII Labour government of Clement Attlee. That government won a landslide victory at the 1945 general election, as working people mobilized to advance their interests and claim the better life that the rulers promised the war’s end would bring.

The new service was hugely popular. Working people in their millions flocked to hospitals and doctors’ practices, previously denied to them. Tony Benn, former Labour Member of Parliament, characterized the NHS as “the most socialist . . . thing ever done by a government in Britain.” But it is socialist only in the sense of *bourgeois socialism*—the view that the state is like an empty sack that can be filled with capitalist reforms which, as they accumulate, will amount to socialism.

This reformist perspective gains support from sections of the capitalist rulers seeking to placate workers and divert independent working-class political action, particularly in times of rising class struggle. It has played a major role in politics in the United Kingdom for more than a century.

In fact, the original blueprint for the NHS was drawn up by the Conservative wartime cabinet of Winston Churchill, drawing on steps that had already been taken during the war.

The 1948 National Health Service Act, drawn up by Labour health minister Aneurin Bevan, differed from the



July 29 protest against cuts to services at Whittington Hospital in north London

Conservative proposal not in its stated objective of providing universal health care but in nationalizing the hospitals, and placing them under the control of regional authorities.

In order to win the acceptance of doctors at the top of the pay pyramid—the consultants, and surgeons—the government had to “stuff their mouths with gold,” as health minister Bevan put it, and protectd their private practice rights within the NHS. For providers of services and materials to the newly nationalized NHS—including the highly monopolized drug industry—state funds would guarantee gigantic profits over the long haul. In addition, workers were levied with higher tax burdens to fund the service, while care was class-differentiated according to region.

As is the case with all nationalizations by capitalist governments, the health service was taken out of the hands of individual capitalists only to return it to the capitalist class as a whole. Health provision remained a commodity, albeit a cheaper and more accessible one. It wasn’t long before Labour started to impose direct health charges, as government funds were diverted to the UK’s participation in the Washington-led war against the Korean people in the early 1950s.

## Coalition government plans

In July the Cameron-led coalition government introduced proposals for a structural overhaul of the NHS in England and Wales—the “biggest” since it was established, according to the *Financial Times*. Under the plan, regional authorities would be abolished and control of 80 percent of the health budget would be placed in the hands of consortia of local doctors. The NHS “will be run as a market” the paper says, creating lucrative openings for health maintenance organizations and insurers, in which staff would leave the NHS to sell their services back, and the existing cap on private patient earnings will be abolished. Eliminating national union pay bargaining for hospital workers is a target of the reorganization.

Measures to expand the market within the NHS began in the early 1990s, with the Conservative government’s Private Finance Initiative (PFI). The Blair Labour government took further steps, projecting that all hospitals would become stand alone, self-financing “foundation trusts”—raising money from government and from private capital. During this time, the number of NHS hospital beds declined by one-third.

Blair was unable to carry through his goals to the end in face of opposi-

tion from the Gordon Brown–led forces within the Labour Party who were connected to union leaderships, especially in the public sector. Today just half of the hospitals in England and Wales are Foundation Trusts. In Scotland, where health is the purview of the government, London was not able to even start the move to Foundation Trusts, blocked by a coalition of the labor officialdom and the Scottish National Party.

Even under the more limited PFI in Scotland, costs have rocketed upwards and patient care has eroded. A recent article in the *Edinburgh Evening News* reports that the private company Consort, which leases the Edinburgh Royal Infirmary to NHS Lothian, will have charged the government institution seven times the cost of the hospital by 2028. Consort—a consortium of the construction companies Balfour Beatty and Morrison’s, along with the Royal Bank of Scotland—the hospital owner, also profits from running the canteen, hospital shops, and car park.

The government’s new proposals are an effort to carry through what Blair couldn’t. The leaderships of five national trade unions have submitted motions for the annual Trades Union Congress in September calling for protests in the face of the government’s cuts.

*Pete Clifford in Edinburgh, Scotland, contributed to this article.*

## —MILITANT LABOR FORUMS—

### CALIFORNIA

#### San Francisco

**‘Power Must Be Conquered by a Conscious People,’ The Legacy of Thomas Sankara and the Burkina Faso Revolution of 1983–87.** Speaker: Lea Sherman, Socialist Workers Party candidate for California governor. Fri., Aug. 20. Dinner, 6:30 p.m.; program, 7:30 p.m. 5482 Mission St. Tel.: (415) 584-2135.

### FLORIDA

#### Miami

**Eyewitness Report from Haiti; Seven Months after the Earthquake.** Speakers: Jean Louis Fadinier, Haitian activist who recently visited Haiti; Ernest Mailhot, Socialist Workers Party candidate for Miami City Commission District 5. Sat., Aug. 21, 7:30 p.m. Donation: \$5. 719 NE 79th St. Tel.: (305) 757-8869.

### NEW YORK

#### Manhattan

**How the U.S. Government Uses ‘War on Terror’ to Attack Workers Rights.** A panel discussion. Fri., Aug. 20, 8 p.m. 307 W. 36th St., 10th floor (near 8th Ave.). Tel.: (212) 736-2540.

### WASHINGTON

#### Seattle

**How the Labor Movement Can Fight for Jobs for All.** Speaker: representative, Socialist Workers Party. Fri., Aug. 20, 7:30 p.m. Donation: \$5. 5418 Rainier Ave. South (Brandon Street stop on bus no. 7 or 9). Tel.: (206) 323-1755.

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*by Jack Barnes*



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# FBI expands ‘terrorist’ investigation of Somalis

BY FRANK FORRESTAL

MINNEAPOLIS—In the latest expansion of a national FBI investigation of the Somali community, the U.S. Justice Department announced August 5 the indictment of 14 people they accuse of providing “money, personnel and services” to al-Shabab, an armed Islamist group fighting the U.S.-backed Transitional Federal Government in Somalia.

Twelve of those indicted are from Minnesota—which has about 50,000 Somalis, the largest concentration of Somalis in the United States. The other two are from Alabama and California.

“These arrests and charges should serve as an unmistakable warning to others considering joining terrorist groups like al-Shabab,” U.S. attorney general Eric Holder said at a August 5 press conference in Washington. “If you choose this route, you can expect to find yourself in a U.S. jail cell or a casualty on the battlefield in Somalia.”

Indictments against two of the accused—Amina Farah Ali, 33, and Hawo Mohamed Hassan, 63, both U.S. citizens from Rochester, Minnesota—have received front-page news treatment here. They are the only defendants currently in the country.

Ali and Hassan are also the first women charged in what the *Minneapolis Star-Tribune* called “one of the most sweeping counterterrorism investigations since the attacks of 9/11.” Both women have been charged with fundraising for al-Shabab. Both women have pleaded not guilty.

At the arraignment in St. Paul August 9, some 30 Somali women packed the courtroom in a show of support for the two women. Before the hearing at the federal courthouse, about a dozen protested outside.

Farhiyo Mohamed, Hassan’s niece, disputed the charges in an article in the *Star-Tribune*. She reported that money raised by the two went to a shelter for elderly people in Somalia to buy food and medicine, not to al-Shabab. Mohamed

said her aunt “hates al-Shabab because what they do is not right. She would never help out people like that.”

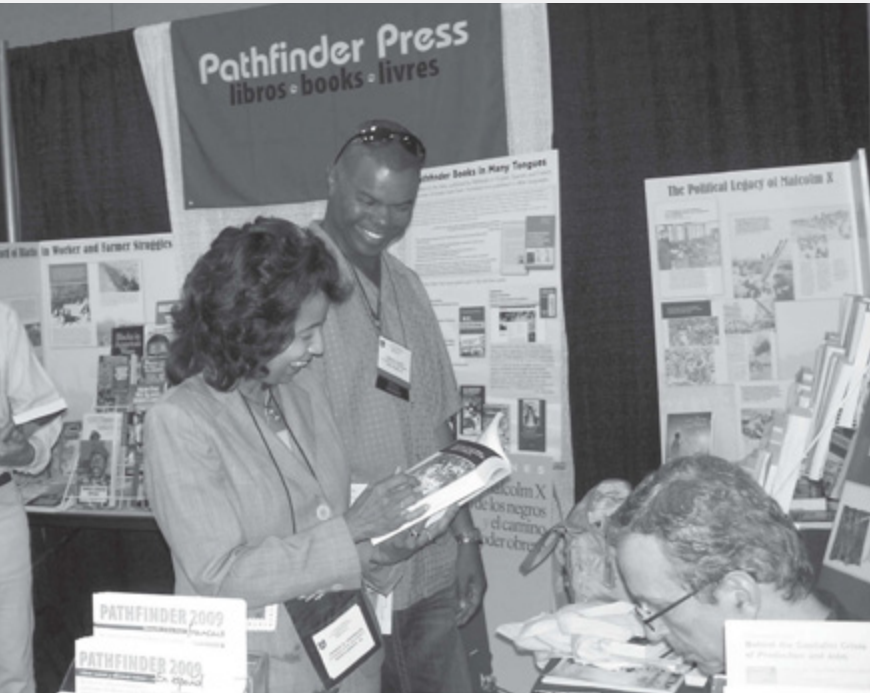
According to the *Star-Tribune*, the FBI claims the women sometimes made “open appeals for support of violent jihad.” If convicted, the two women face up to 15 years in prison.

Hassan told Minnesota Public Radio that the FBI raided her apartment last summer. For the past two years, the cop agency has been active in gathering information and intimidating many in the Somali community, approaching Somalis in their homes, on campuses, at airports, and in the streets.

Mohamed told the *Star-Tribune* the FBI got people to make false statements. “I heard some ladies snitched. They made up some stories. . . . Sometimes they just make up this stuff to get money,” she said.

Some local Somali leaders have urged cooperation with the FBI. According to *USA Today*, Abdirizak Bihi, whose nephew left the United States in 2008 and was killed in Somalia, has “persuaded 20 families to talk to the FBI.” Many in Somali neighborhoods, however, continue to be leery about contact with government agents.

## African American librarians buy Pathfinder books



Militant/Janice Lynn

BIRMINGHAM, Alabama—Participants in the National Conference of African American Librarians, held here August 4–8, browse at the Pathfinder Press booth. Three librarians purchased copies of the publisher’s newest title *Malcolm X, Black Liberation, and the Road to Workers Power* by Jack Barnes. Among other titles purchased were *Cosmetics, Fashions, and the Exploitation of Women*, *Women’s Liberation and the African Freedom Struggle*, *The Working Class and the Transformation of Learning*, and *Malcolm X on Afro-American History*. Twenty librarians signed up to be contacted by a Pathfinder representative. Two participants in the conference invited Pathfinder Press to set up a booth at an October conference of librarians from historically Black colleges.

—JANICE LYNN

# Puerto Rico independence fighter Lebrón dies

BY SETH GALINSKY

Lolita Lebrón, who spent 25 years in prison in the United States for participating in an armed protest in Washington, D.C., to demand independence for Puerto Rico, died August 1 in San Juan.

Lebrón, Rafael Cancel Miranda, Irving Flores, and Andrés Figueroa Cordero carried out an armed action from the gallery of the U.S. Congress on March 1, 1954. Lebrón shouted, “*Viva Puerto Rico Libre*” (Long live free Puerto Rico!) and unfurled a Puerto Rican flag. Five congressmen were struck by bullets.

The four, all members of the Nationalist Party headed by Pedro Albizu Campos, were living in New York City. Cancel Miranda was a press operator in a shoe factory; Figueroa Cordero, a worker in a butcher shop; Flores, a furniture factory worker; and Lebrón, a sewing machine operator in a garment shop.

In a 2004 interview with the *Washington Post* magazine, Lebrón described some of the conditions Puerto Rican workers faced in New York. She recounted seeing signs that said, “No blacks, no dogs, no Puerto Ricans.”

“They told me it was a paradise; this was no paradise,” she told the *Post*.

In 1950 U.S. troops crushed a Nationalist-led uprising in Puerto Rico. That same year Oscar Collazo was arrested for taking part in an attack on Blair House, the temporary residence of U.S. president Harry Truman. In 1952 Puerto Rico’s governor signed a commonwealth pact formalizing the island’s domination by Washington. Then, in 1953 at U.S. insistence, the United Nations removed Puerto Rico from its list of colonies.

“The Yankees won a victory and got Puerto Rico taken off the list of non-sovereign countries. They presented us to the world as satisfied slaves,” recalled Cancel Miranda in a 1998 interview. The four “decided to carry out a demonstration that would draw the world’s at-

tention to the truth about Puerto Rico.”

The independence fighters were put on trial in Washington, D.C. The three men were each sentenced to 75 years and Lebrón to 50 years. They were tried a second time in New York for “conspiracy to overthrow the government” and six more years were added to their sentences.

For the first 15 years or so of their imprisonment there was almost no campaign for their release. But in the 1970s this changed. Committees demanding the release of the four were formed in Chicago and New York. The campaign spread to Puerto Rico and Latin America. The Cuban government played a prominent role in pushing for their release and for recognition of Puerto Rico as a U.S. colony.

Figueroa Cordero’s sentence was commuted in 1977 because of his deteriorating health. He died of cancer while the rest were still in prison.

In 1979 President James Carter granted clemency to the rest of the prisoners. “We didn’t do anything that we should regret,” Lebrón said on her release. “Ev-

eryone has the right to defend their freedom.”

Some 7,000 welcomed them at the airport on their return to Puerto Rico Sept. 12, 1979.

Soon after their release, Lebrón thanked the Cuban people and Fidel Castro for the support that helped win their freedom. She pointed out that Cuba’s solidarity had “paved the way for the successes and victories in the case of Puerto Rico.” A month later Lebrón, Cancel Miranda, and Flores traveled to New York to meet with Castro at the Cuban mission to the United Nations.

In the 2004 *Post* interview, Lebrón bristled at the U.S. government charge that she was a terrorist.

“Who calls me a terrorist?” she said. “The most terrorist country in the world! What other country dropped the atomic bomb? And they call me a terrorist.”

Lebrón stayed active in the movement for Puerto Rican independence. In 2001, when she was 81 years old, she was arrested for participating in civil disobedience against the U.S. bombing range on the island of Vieques.



Lolita Lebrón, Rafael Cancel Miranda, center, and Andrés Figueroa Cordero, March 1, 1954, after arrest for opening fire in U.S. House of Representatives. “I want freedom for my country. My country is Puerto Rico,” said Lebrón.



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How, since the inception of the modern revolutionary workers movement in 1848, the ruling classes have responded with police spies, agents provocateurs, and political frame-ups. **\$5**



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## ON THE PICKET LINE

### Illinois: Unionists rally against Honeywell lockout

Hundreds of workers rallied August 7 in Metropolis, Illinois, to back the fight of United Steelworkers Local 7669 members for a new contract. Participating in the protest were unionists from Indiana, Illinois, Kentucky, and Tennessee, reported KFVS-TV.

With negotiations stalled, Honeywell on June 28 accused the union of not giving 24 hours notice of a strike, and locked out 220 union employees. Workers have been picketing around the clock ever since. The company is attempting to run the plant with salaried Honeywell employees and contract workers.

The factory, which is located on the Ohio River at the southern edge of Illinois, is the nation's only uranium conversion plant. Unionists have erected 42 crosses nearby in memory of workers who died of cancer. "Many workers believe that the plant contributed to their fellow employees' illnesses," reported the *New York Times*, "which is a central reason the union is refusing to accept the plant operator's plan to reduce pensions for newly hired workers and health benefits for retirees."

—Brian Williams

### Transit workers in Arizona strike 7 days for new contract

Transit workers in Tucson, Arizona, struck for seven days in early August, beating back the city government's attempt to reduce workers' health-care coverage. The three-year contract between Sun Tran, which operates the transportation system for the city, and Teamsters Local 104 expired at midnight July 31. In a 369-7 vote, the unionists rejected the city's final offer, which included a wage freeze, and set up picket lines August 2. Sun Tran has 627 employees, 526 of whom are represented by the union.

In an effort to cut across solidarity for the striking workers, the local media emphasized the "inconveniences" facing bus riders. But the workers held firm.

A new two-year contract was ratified August 8 with a vote of 250 to 76. According to KOLD-TV, workers medical insurance will be fully covered. They will receive no wage increase. If there are any layoffs over the next two years, the pact requires negotiations for five days. If the issue is not resolved, the union could then terminate the contract and go on strike.

—Brian Williams

### Miners halt production at British Columbia mine

A strike by members of the United Mineworkers of America shut down production August 7-8 at the Coal Mountain mine in southeastern British Columbia. The workers are demanding

a wage raise and a new contract. The mine is owned by Teck Resources Inc., one of the world's largest producers of metallurgical coal used in making steel. The 168 workers at Coal Mountain point to the lower wages they're paid compared with workers at other Teck mines as the main issue in dispute, reported Toronto *Globe and Mail*. Their contract expired at the end of 2009.

In June the company was forced to shut down its Greenhills mine, also in British Columbia, after an explosion there.

—Brian Williams

### Mill workers in Illinois strike ProBuild Lumber

YORKVILLE, Illinois—Sixty mill workers on strike against ProBuild Lumber here and in nearby Wheaton are fighting company demands to cut wages and increase health insurance costs. The members of Teamsters Local 673 walked out July 28.

"We just can't accept what the company is asking for—a 5 percent wage cut, and especially their medical plan, which will cost workers \$280 a month for family coverage," said Bryan McKenna, a 10-year worker in the mill shop.



Militant/Illona Gersh

Teamster strikers and supporters picket ProBuild Lumber in Yorkville, Illinois, August 5.

Currently workers are covered under the Teamsters health plan, which is free to union members and their families. The company also wants to reduce call-back rights and take away paid holidays, McKenna explained.

ProBuild is the country's largest supplier of building materials for home building and to professional and contract builders.

"We're the ones that made this company," said Tony Cruz, a mill worker since 1987. "Now they don't want to guarantee us an eight-hour workday anymore. They want to control us, but they can't." Joe Galto, with 27 years at the company said, "This is the first time we've been on strike. We had to stand up."

—Betsey Farley

## Benefits end for growing number of jobless

BY BRIAN WILLIAMS

Among the growing number of workers unemployed long-term are those without jobs for 99 weeks or more, whose benefit payments have been cut off. In June this included about 1.4 million people, according to the Labor Department. Some have been without benefits since March and their numbers are rising.

Often described as the "99ers," these workers are demanding Congress extend unemployment compensation beyond 99 weeks. However, there's little support among the Democratic and Republican legislators to do so. They argue that any further payments must be balanced against cutbacks elsewhere in social programs because of the federal deficit.

The impact of this halt in unemployment benefits has been devastating. Karl Schafer, a 52-year-old man from Ohio, was laid off from a truck factory more than two years ago. Since then he's applied for hundreds of jobs. "I'm a good worker and it's extremely

hard," he told the *Los Angeles Times*. "I was a \$50,000-a-year worker, and now I'm reduced to zero." He's not eligible for welfare, as only workers with dependent children qualify.

On July 22 President Barack Obama signed a bill into law temporarily renewing two federal programs that extend jobless benefits to anywhere from 60 to 99 weeks, depending on a state's unemployment rate. For workers to get 99 weeks of payments, the official statewide unemployment rate must be above 8 percent.

Federal benefits for millions were suspended for seven weeks in June and July as politicians in Congress wrangled over whether to maintain a program that extended compensation beyond 26 weeks of unemployment. The program expired June 2. The new law provides payments retroactive to that date and is in effect through November 30.

In July, 6.6 million workers—45 percent of the 14.6 million the government counts as unemployed—have been job-

less for more than 26 weeks, reported the Labor Department. About 4.4 million have been looking for work for at least a year.

"Among unemployed people in their 50s, a common worry is that they will never find steady work again, forcing them to scrape by until they are eligible for Social Security benefits," reported the *Los Angeles Times*. In March, 3.5 million people age 50 and older were unemployed, double the number in March 2008.

Economists and the media describe this situation as the "new normal." "The old normal of unemployment at about 5 percent during buoyant economic growth is over," stated the *New York Times*. The current levels of about double that figure is what workers must grow to accept, they argue.

As depression conditions deepen the bosses are eliminating millions more jobs. Treasury Secretary Timothy Geithner told the media August 6 that he expects unemployment to go up further before it begins to come down.

## 25, 50, AND 75 YEARS AGO



August 30, 1985

The Reagan Administration has drafted an executive order that will, if signed by the President, repeal affirmative action requirements for companies that do business with the government. The White House said that such requirements encourage employers to discriminate against white men and impose costly burdens on employers.

These affirmative action requirements have been in place for 20 years and were one result of the powerful civil rights movement in the 1950's and 1960's that overturned the Jim Crow system of legal segregation in the South and won new rights for all working people.



August 22, 1960

The Cuban people have taken a giant step forward in their revolutionary struggle for full independence. The Aug. 7 government action nationalizing some \$750 million worth of U.S.-owned properties virtually ends Wall Street's 60-year stranglehold on the island's economy. It appears only a matter of time before remaining U.S. interests, valued at about \$250 million, will also revert to the Cuban people.

The nationalization decree, read to a jubilant population by Premier Castro, declared the step was made necessary by U.S. economic aggression and by the need to "affirm the consolidation of the economic independence of the country."



August 24, 1935

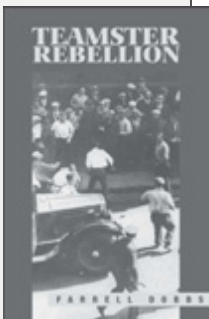
MINNEAPOLIS, Aug. 19—Early this morning a mass picket line of five hundred workers battled with police as the latter escorted scores of strike-breakers into the Strutwear plant, where a strike of the American Federation of Hosiery Workers has been on since last Friday.

Last Thursday night it was announced that the strike would be called the following morning. On Friday morning enough pickets were on hand to block effectively any attempt on the part of the management to open up the plant. The Strutwear plant (which for years has followed a notorious anti-union and low-wage policy) employs about 1,100 workers, mostly young girls.

### Teamster Rebellion

by Farrell Dobbs

The 1934 strikes that built the industrial union movement in Minneapolis and helped pave the way for the CIO, as recounted by a central leader of that battle.—\$19



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# ‘Good to hear candidate who supports workers’

BY ERIC SIMPSON  
AND BETSEY STONE

SAN FRANCISCO—“It’s good to hear there is a candidate who supports us,” a bus driver called out as Gerardo Sánchez, Socialist Workers Party candidate for Congress in the 8th District, campaigned outside a bus barn where drivers for the Municipal Transportation Agency (Muni) come to start their routes.

The Muni workers, who drive buses, streetcars, and cable cars here, have twice voted down a package of concessions negotiated by Mayor Gavin Newsom, Muni management, and the executive board of Transport Workers Union Local 250-A.

The drivers have been under pressure to accept restrictions in overtime pay and other cuts to make up for deficits in the transit agency budget. After they voted no the second time, they were hit with a barrage of attacks in the big-business press, calling them greedy and irresponsible, and blaming them for cutbacks in transit services and a fare increase from \$1.50 to \$2.00.

“The Democratic and Republican party politicians try to convince us that there is a limited pool of money in the city budget, and if this runs out, everyone has to be cut back,” Sánchez explained as he handed out campaign flyers to the drivers. “The Socialist Workers candidates say there is plenty of wealth in California, wealth we workers have created to provide for

what working people need.”

When one of the drivers explained to Sánchez that Muni managers are pushing for cutting pensions of new hires, the candidate said that this was aimed at weakening the unions by dividing workers with more seniority from newer ones.

“We have to stop relying on the Republicans and the Democrats to solve our problems,” Sánchez added in the discussion. “These parties always put the interests of the bankers, real estate developers, and industrialists first. We need a labor party, based on a fighting union movement, that puts workers’ interests first. That’s a course toward taking political power from the capitalists who exploit us.”

The Socialist Workers candidates and their supporters have also joined the fight against the antiworker, anti-immigrant law SB 1070 in Arizona and have participated in recent demonstrations in opposition to a “secure communities” program being implemented in San Francisco that requires sending fingerprints of those in jail for any reason to Homeland Security.

On August 7 SWP gubernatorial candidate Lea Sherman and other campaign supporters joined a spirited three-mile march for immigrant rights through downtown San Jose. It was organized by Voluntarios de la Comunidad.

Protesters were eager to discuss the impact of the economic crisis on their



Militant/Betsey Stone

Lea Sherman, right, Socialist Workers Party candidate for governor of California, joined August 7 march for immigrant rights through downtown San Jose.

jobs and working conditions. “We want deeds, not promises,” Efren Garcia told Sherman. A janitor for 15 years and member of Service Employees International Union Local 1877, he said conditions for workers have been nothing but “down, down, down.” Now he does double the work for the same pay. “On the job we need control over our conditions of work to protect against speedup, which jeopardizes health and safety,” Sherman responded.

“Factories aren’t providing work these days, and when they do you’re always in danger,” one participant stated at the open mike at the rally. “Stop the deportations! Give us papers!” she demanded.

After being introduced at the rally by Voluntarios de la Comunidad lead-

er José Sandoval, Sherman was applauded when she emphasized, “The fight for immigrant rights is a fight for the whole working class.”

Pointing to the trade unionists who traveled on buses from Los Angeles to Phoenix the week before to stand up against SB 1070, she said, “This is an example for the entire union movement to emulate.”

“We say no to the ‘orders of removal’ of immigrant workers, no to the sweeps, no to the militarization of the border, stop the deportations and raids. For legalization of all undocumented workers now!” Sherman said.

After listening to her speech, several workers approached Sherman to find out more about the campaign. José Flores told her that he recently worked 65 hours in a week and was paid only \$400. “My campaign calls for shortening the workweek with no cut in pay to spread the available work,” Sherman explained. “We also need a massive jobs program to put unemployed workers to work building houses, hospitals, day care centers, and mass transportation.

“I want you to get on television and debate the other candidates,” Flores responded. “I’m tired of so many false promises.”

## Montreal: 200 march against cop brutality

BY ANNETTE KOURI

MONTREAL—About 200 people marched here August 8 to demand “Justice for Fredy Villanueva” two years after he was killed by Montreal cops. The march began and ended in the park in the Montreal North neighborhood where Villanueva and four other youth, including Fredy Villanueva’s brother Dany were approached by two cops on Aug. 9, 2008. Police officer Jean Lapointe later admitted killing Fredy Villanueva and wounding two other youth, claiming self-defense. All five young people were unarmed.

Lilian Madrid Antunes has led the fight for justice for her son. In a declaration to initiate the action, she said, “I send you this invitation to commemorate the loss of Fredy, to keep his memory alive forever, and to bring the real culprit before justice—that his death doesn’t stay unknown like many others and that never again will a mother suffer like I did and still do.”

Marchers also demanded that Dany Villanueva be allowed to stay in Canada. In the last few months the Immigration Courts have issued a deportation order against him. He is one of the principal witnesses of his brother’s killing.

## Bay Area transit workers fight givebacks

BY BETSEY STONE

OAKLAND, California—Spirits were high as bus drivers gathered outside the Amalgamated Transit Union (ATU) Local 192 hall here after they got news of a court ruling in their favor.

On August 2 a county judge blocked AC Transit from unilaterally imposing its contract demands on 1,750 drivers, mechanics, janitors, and others who keep the buses rolling in Oakland and cities throughout the East Bay.

AC Transit implemented the conditions outlined in its contract demands July 18, after three months of negotiations, during which the union refused

to accept the company’s proposals. Aimed at reducing labor costs by \$15 million, the takebacks included new rules that reduced overtime pay, set up a two-tier pension system, and increased workers’ health insurance costs.

“What AC Transit did wasn’t fair,” said Jimmy Deckard, a driver with 29 years working for the company. “We couldn’t go along with them telling us what to do, with the union having no say.”

The drivers expressed anger at work rules that reduced pay for split shifts. The new terms effectively cut one and

a half hours’ pay per day for many drivers working two shifts separated by hours of unpaid downtime.

The company also ended overtime pay for shifts over eight hours, requiring more than 40 hours work in a week. “This means they could have me work a second route if someone doesn’t show up, without paying me overtime,” commented a driver with over 10 years at AC Transit, who asked that her name not be used due to fear of victimization. “How can they expect us to pay more for medical insurance, and copayments, if at the same time they are lowering pay?”

“It’s a union-busting tactic when you take a position that you don’t have to negotiate with the union,” ATU Local 192 president Claudia Hudson told a meeting of the AC Transit Board of Directors July 28.

“This is about changing drivers’ schedules daily, disrupting lives,” Hudson said, emphasizing that new rules giving drivers different routes on different days were especially burdensome to workers with children. She pointed to the longer hours and lack of training for new routes as a threat to safety.

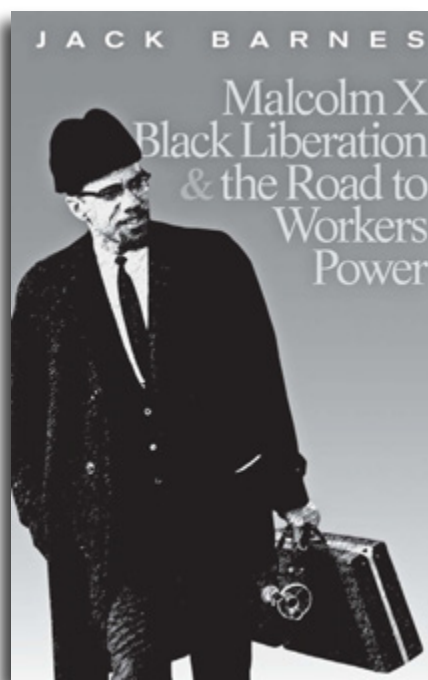
Following the judge’s ruling, company spokesman Arnold Johnson said the return to old work rules would cost \$300,000 a week, driving AC Transit further into debt. Johnson threatened further fare increases and reduction in services, blaming the union. In recent months routes have been cut and fares rose from \$1.75 to \$2.00.

A court decision last month ordered the union and AC Transit into binding arbitration. The first hearing before the arbitrator is August 20.

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by Jack Barnes



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# Chinese economy not immune to world crisis

(Second in a series)

BY DOUG NELSON

After 1978, the Chinese Communist Party government began to employ capitalist methods and open the country to direct foreign investment, ushering in an era of rapid and dramatic changes. The first article in this series outlined some of the developments leading up to this shift. This part will review the diminishing place of state-owned industry; the consequences of allowing the capitalist market to guide the development of land, building construction, and manufacturing; and the emphasis placed on maximizing exports and attracting foreign investment—the two main pillars of the Chinese economic “miracle.”

With the Chinese Revolution, workers and peasants overturned feudal and capitalist property relations. New economic relations were established based on state property, economic planning, and state monopoly of banking and foreign trade.

Draped in socialist phrases and pretense, the ruling caste of the Chinese CP, which rode the revolution’s crest to power in 1949, administered and corrupted these conquests for their own narrow interests. From the beginning, the possibilities for social and economic development on new foundations of the toiling classes were undermined.

An expanding world market and China’s social conditions provided an opportunity for the Chinese rulers to entice foreign capital to the country’s source of cheap labor. The levers of the capitalist market over the past three decades spurred economic growth and technological advances. China’s gross domestic product increased at an average rate of about 10 percent per year, compared to 6 percent in the previous two decades. This development, based on the exploitation of labor for profit, has brought with it a rapid rise in the size of the working class, and deep economic and social contradictions that are leading to crises and class battles.

## Corruption of state property

Over the last three decades, the role of state and collective property has diminished. As recently as 1978, state-owned enterprises accounted for more than three-quarters of industrial out-

put, while all but a tiny fraction of the rest came from collectively owned rural establishments under the direction of local governments.

State-owned firms continue to play a significant part in the Chinese economy, particularly in key sectors of heavy industry, transport, and tobacco processing. But in other areas of industry, such as light manufacture, various forms of private ownership now predominate. Between 1995 and 2005, the number of state-owned enterprises declined from 118,000 to about 27,500, as many, particularly the smaller ones, were privatized.

According to government statistics, the percentage of industrial workers in state-owned enterprises declined from 68 percent in 1995 to 36 percent in 2003. A recent U.S. congressional report gave the following breakdown for industrial output in 2005: state-owned enterprises, 38 percent; foreign-invested private firms, 28 percent; domestic private companies, 18 percent. The remaining 16 percent represents two other types of ownership: mixed ventures owned jointly by the state and private parties, and collectively owned enterprises run by local governments.

The administration of state property has become more capitalistic alongside the rise of privately owned domestic and foreign ventures. Managers of state-owned enterprises receive a share of company profits as an incentive to maximize the extraction of value from workers’ labor. Alongside such legal avenues for personal gain, has risen the pilfering of state property through forms of corruption that typify the development of capitalist property relations.

State-owned enterprises have also become involved in a range of financial speculation as they seek avenues to increase their rate of return. Major state companies buy and sell shares on the Chinese stock market. A number are simply run by state holding companies and operate much like private firms, including selling their stock in overseas exchanges such as the United States.

## Financial bubble in real estate

The state retains legal ownership of urban land. Rural land is considered collectively owned by peasants from a given area, but is administered by local governments.

Today, much of farming in China is organized by leasing land rights to peasant households, often for 30-year periods. Long-term leases are also issued to individuals and companies—both domestic and foreign—for commercial, industrial, and residential development. Depending on the purpose, land use rights are issued for as long as 70 years.

Real estate development and speculation have become major avenues for investment, resulting in a massive financial bubble. Local governments disproportionately sold land rights to urban developers building luxury dwellings where they could charge the highest prices. Developers have been able to turn a profit even if whole buildings remained vacant, as speculative home buying became the most popular and lucrative investment option for wealthy individuals. This drove up prices. As prices rose, land hoarding by developers increased, raising prices



AP photo

**Hundreds of farmers demand local government compensate them for confiscated land during protest at Xiditou township government, outside of Tianjin, in north China, March 21, 2006, following promises by Chinese premier Wen Jiabao to protect farmers’ land rights.**

further. And all this was facilitated by periods of easy credit from state banks looking to “stimulate” the economy and their bottom lines.

Average house values in 70 Chinese cities rose nearly 18 percent over the course of one year beginning April 2009. This trend has been particularly acute in major cities in the east, where economic development and foreign investment has been concentrated. In Beijing over the same period average housing prices increased by more than 95 percent. Today a large glut in commercial and luxury real estate and a growing financial bubble in the housing market reveal one of the growing vulnerabilities in the Chinese economy.

## Peasants driven off land

Collusion of local governments in the confiscation of rural land for development projects has been commonplace, sparking many protests each year by peasants in defense of their collective ownership rights. As officials and developers enrich themselves, many peasants were forced off the land and sought work in industrial centers. In major cities as well, local officials have schemed to evict working people to make room for profitable development projects.

In 2008 the government began to allow the direct transfer of land rights from peasants to developers, which served to both stem the social consequences of rampant land grabbing and take another step toward private property.

Meanwhile, an acute housing crisis for working people has been mounting in China’s major cities, where many live in shantytowns or employee dormitories.

This year the government tightened credit and implemented other measures in an attempt to reduce housing inflation caused by speculation and to begin building desperately needed working-class habitation.

The Chinese economy has been fueled in large part by foreign investment and a strategy of capturing the largest possible share of the world market for its exports. Today China is one of the top destinations for foreign investment, and the biggest exporter in the world.

Since 1979 the value of China’s exports has increased more than 100 fold, reaching \$1.4 trillion in 2008 and comprising more than 30 percent of the country’s gross domestic product.

Beginning in 1980 the government

established economic zones for foreign investment in more than 50 major cities, the entire island province of Hainan, and several areas along the Yangtze River valley. They are run by local governments and provide lucrative incentives for would-be investors, namely cheap land and labor.

In addition, hundreds of smaller zones have been set up by provincial and municipal governments throughout China.

During this period, more than \$880 billion in utilized direct foreign investment has been funneled into China, according to government figures. In 2008 this amounted to \$92 billion. (Some Chinese investors are believed to disguise their funds’ origin in order to take advantage of preferential policies for foreign capital, making this figure a little higher than the actual amount.)

More than half of foreign investment in China is directed to manufacturing; nearly a quarter is in real estate development.

A large portion of foreign-invested industry is directed toward the production of consumer goods for export. Some 55 percent of the country’s exports are produced in foreign-invested companies.

It is the great weight placed on maximizing exports and foreign investment in the Chinese economy that is responsible for a substantial portion of China’s rapid—and uneven—economic growth; and for driving tens of millions of peasants from the countryside to the cities to work in huge industrial centers that have sprung up out of nowhere amid a vast sea of rural backwardness.

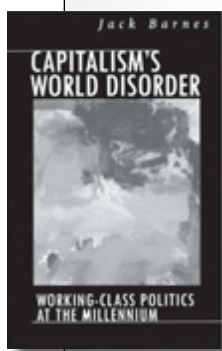
It is also a driving force behind stiffening trade competition and declining profit rates worldwide, as well as a growing crisis of capitalist-style overproduction in China, and the increasing grind on Chinese working people.

Ironically, it is also these two linchpins of the Chinese miracle—the maximum export model and reliance on foreign investment—that are the most directly impacted by the unfolding worldwide economic crises.

The next article will discuss the conditions of the working class, as well as the impact of the world financial crisis in China, what it reveals about the imbalances in the Chinese economy, and consequences of the government’s “stimulus” efforts, which should help to unmask some of the myths behind the Chinese economic “miracle.”

## Capitalism’s World Disorder

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# Cuban 5 prisoner's art inspired by 'just cause'

In the article below, Antonio Guerrero, one of five Cuban revolutionaries jailed in the United States for the last 12 years, tells the story of how he learned to draw and paint in prison.

Known internationally as the Cuban Five, Guerrero, Gerardo Hernández, Ramón Labañino, René González, and Fernando González, were arrested in September 1998 in Miami. They were convicted on frame-up charges ranging from “conspiracy to act as unregistered foreign agents” and “conspiracy to commit espionage,” and in the case of Hernández “conspiracy to commit murder.” They were given stiff sentences.

The five had been gathering information on right-wing Cuban exile groups in Florida with a long history of carrying out violent acts against the Cuban Revolution, with the complicity of the U.S. government.

Guerrero was sentenced to life in prison plus 10 years. On Oct. 13, 2009, his sentence was reduced to 21 years and 10 months, after an appeals court ruled that the sentences of three of the five—Guerrero, Labañino, and Fernando González—were excessive. Guerrero is currently imprisoned at the Federal Correctional Institute in Florence, Colorado.

At the original sentencing in December 2001, Guerrero told the court, “If I were asked once again to cooperate in this task, I would again do it with honor.”

In an interview published in the Sept. 2, 2008, issue of the Cuban magazine *Bohemia*, Guerrero said the Cuban Five should not be “viewed in a different dimension from millions of compatriots who each day give everything for the Revolution and who could have been in our place and would have acted in exactly the same way. We are nothing more than Cubans of these times, revolutionaries of these times.”

Guerrero was born in Miami, Oct. 16, 1958. His family returned to Cuba in November of that year and decided to stay after the triumph of the revolution in January 1959.

A book of poems written by Guerrero

in prison was published in English and Spanish under the title *From My Altitude*. An exhibit of Guerrero's paintings with the same title has been touring the United States. There have been shows in California, Colorado, Kentucky, Oregon, Washington, D.C., and at the U.S. Social Forum in Detroit. See box below for upcoming exhibit.

Translation into English is by the *Militant*.



## Outline of my artistic development

BY ANTONIO GUERRERO

Nov. 15, 2007

At the beginning of 2003, when I had just completed my first year of imprisonment in this penitentiary in Florence, Colorado, I searched, anxiously, for something that would occupy my time, far from the tense and violent atmosphere that reigned in this prison.

Poetry had been an effective weapon to overcome the long periods of unjust punishment in the cells of the so-called “hole,” as well as the prolonged “lockdowns,” which the whole prison population here was subjected to after any violent incident. But with the constant commotion during the “normal” routine of the prison, my muse, sometimes startled, would fade away and fail to inspire me.

So, one fine day, I went to the so-called “Hobby Craft,” (Department of Recreation) and I found a prisoner giving pencil drawing classes; basically everyone was making a portrait. I was impressed above all by the work of the instructor and I asked him how I could participate in his class. It turned out this person was very enthusiastic about teaching what he knew, and even more fortunate, he was in my dorm unit.

He gave me some materials and by the following day I had decided on my first project: a portrait of my beloved mother.

Before I even finished this first work, that sudden and vile punishment came in which we were isolated in cells in the “hole,” the five of us in our five prisons.

It was the result of the application of the Special Administrative Measures (SAM), ordered by the U.S. Attorney General. International solidarity and the energetic demands of our attorneys made it possible for that unjust punishment to be lifted in one month.

It so happened that upon returning to my dormitory unit I had “lost” my placement and they had no cell in which to put me. I noticed that the inmate who gave the drawing classes was alone in his cell, and I told the guard: Put me with him. He was surprised because that prisoner was Black, what they call here Afro-American, and here it is rarely seen (nor is it accepted by the prisoners) that prisoners of different



Painting done by Antonio Guerrero while in prison (cropped for space).

racess or groups (or gangs) live together.

As I hoped, Andre accepted me into his cell. Living together my interest in drawing grew and we formed a good friendship.

Every day I dedicated several hours to drawing. My first five works required the help of the instructor. But I remember we were locked down for almost a month, and Andre told me, “Now you are going to do portraits on your own.” And it was during that lockdown that I made the portraits of José Martí and Cintio Vitier on my own. When I finished I realized that I could now continue my independent course, and it was the right moment because Andre was transferred to another penitentiary in California as soon as that lockdown was lifted.

A Native Indian, also imprisoned in my unit, took Andre's place as instructor. We also became good friends. Every night we worked together on different projects. The combination of Andre's and the new instructor's teachings allowed me to create my own method of work.

On some occasions I was able to finish a painting in one day. Up to now I have created more than 100 works with pencil.

In 2005 I met a prisoner who offered to teach me calligraphy. I was interested in making a clean copy of all the poems I had written in these years of imprisonment. I acquired some essential materials, but I realized that the watercolors that I used as ink were not good, nor was there enough. Looking for something that could take the place of the ink (which they don't authorize for purchase) a bunch of watercolor paint tubes fell into my hands from an-

other prisoner. But using it for the calligraphy proved to be another disaster and I asked myself, “What do I do with all this?” I decided to try them out with small paintings. Nobody here painted with that technique, so I could only count on the help of some books I had bought with the paintings. Little by little I was gaining confidence in my strokes with the handful of brushes that I had and I started setting bigger goals.

Color gave another life to my creations. Painting made me happy. In one or two days now I finished each work.

With the help of a great friend of Cuba and the Five, Cindy O'Hara, who sent me books and photos, I was able to finish two interesting projects in watercolor: the birds that are endemic to Cuba and the species of Guacamayos. Other caring friends in the United States, like the tireless Priscilla Felia, have sent me books that have been very useful for my self-taught progress in these and other techniques.

At the end of 2005 a prisoner arrived from Marion in Illinois, who began to show impressive pastel photo works. They placed him in my dormitory unit and right away I became interested in this new technique. I acquired some materials, following his instructions. He had a great will to teach, but soon he had problems and was taken to the “hole.” He never returned to the general population.

Once again I found myself wondering what to do with the painting materials I had acquired and once more I returned to the books to immerse myself in an unfamiliar technique. I decided a portrait of Che would be my first work in

Continued on page 9



Antonio Guerrero in prison with his painting of Fidel Castro

Month-long showing, September 2010

## “From my altitude” Artworks by Antonio Guerrero

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# Latino unionists demand visas for Cuban 5 wives

*On August 6 the Labor Council for Latin American Advancement (LCLAA) at its 18th National Membership Convention in Las Vegas, Nevada, unanimously passed a resolution in support of the immediate granting of visas for Olga Salanueva and Adriana Pérez, wives respectively of René González and Gerardo Hernández, two of the Cuban 5. LCLAA is an organization of Latino unionists from both the AFL-CIO and Change to Win trade union federations.*

*Below are major excerpts from the resolution.*

WHEREAS: for more than a decade the United States government has continued to deny visas to Olga Salanueva and Adriana Pérez, whose only purpose to come to the U.S. is to visit their husbands in prison, René González and Gerardo Hernández respectively are two of the Cuban Five who are serving long sentences in the United States.

AND WHEREAS: on December 18, 2009, the Department of Homeland Security denied a Humanitarian Visa to Olga Salanueva. Without any explanation, they denied this elementary recourse to come to the U.S. with the sole purpose to see her husband René González, sentenced to 15 years

in prison.

AND WHEREAS: Adriana Pérez on July 2002 traveled to the United States to visit her husband Gerardo Hernández, who is unjustly serving two life sentences plus 15 years in a U.S. prison, was detained upon her arrival in the Houston Airport. She was photographed, fingerprinted, interrogated for 11 hours, prevented from speaking to a lawyer or Cuban diplomat(s) and subsequently sent back to Cuba, cruelly preventing Adriana from seeing her husband. That this was the last time she was granted a visa to see him during the 11 years he has been imprisoned.

AND WHEREAS: the last visa denial for Adriana was on July 15, 2002, the day of their 21st wedding anniversary and four months later on November 2, Gerardo Hernández's mother died and not even on a sad event like this in the life of any human being was Adriana Pérez allowed to visit her husband to console him.

AND WHEREAS: the applications for Humanitarian Visas for Olga Salanueva and Adriana Pérez are supported by an important number of religious and legal and Human Rights institutions. From the World Council of Churches to the U.S. Council of Christian Churches, the Cuban Council of Churches, the Association of American Jurists, Amnesty International, several Noble Peace Prize winners, parliamentarians, elected officials and intellectuals from all over the world. People and personalities such as former Bishop of Detroit Thomas Gumbleton, former General Secretary of the U.S. Council of Churches Rev. Dr. Joan Brown Campbell, union leaders such as the co-founder of the Farm Workers Union Dolores Huerta, the president of the ILWU Local 10 of San Francisco, California, Melvin MacKay. . . .

THEREFORE LET IT BE RESOLVED: that the Labor Council for Latin American Advancement (LCLAA) supports the immediate granting of Humanitarian Visas for Olga Salanueva and Adriana Pérez for the purpose of visiting their husbands who are imprisoned in the U.S.

## Prisoner art

**Continued from page 8**

pastel and after that I undertook a project of 14 portraits of the most relevant figures of our history. I have continued using pastels without interruption in my artwork. The most recent with this technique are a group of nudes which I have used to study the human figure and the different skin tones under the effect of lights and shadows.

Just two months ago, also being self-taught, I broached painting in acrylics, using an air gun (in English this technique is known as "airbrushing").

And oil painting didn't escape my interest either. Here they only authorize a type of oil paint that is soluble in water and although it is not the traditional paint it is similar enough in its use and results. Up to now I have completed five works with this technique.

Without a specific plan or guide, I believe that it was the right path to first do pencil portraits, and then to take on watercolor, pastels, and finally, oils. Of course, all of these works have been without benefit of the professional instruction that an art school would give, or the guide of an instructor with real knowledge of plastic arts.

What is most important, I think, is that I have overcome imprisonment with a healthy and useful activity like plastic arts. Each work expresses not only my human essence but that of the Five, united by unbreakable principles.

The little I have learned I share unselfishly with other prisoners, and, at times, with great patience. "Truth desires art" as José Martí said, and truth reigns in our hearts, forged with love and commitment to the just cause of our heroic people: That is my motivation for each work of art!



Militant/Rosemary Ray

Event in solidarity with Cuban Five at United Steelworkers (USW) hall in Toronto August 8. Panel from left to right: Heide Trampus, Canada-Cuba Labour Solidarity Network; Ken Neumann, USW Canada; Olga Salanueva, wife of Cuban Five prisoner René González; Adriana Pérez, wife of Cuban Five prisoner Gerardo Hernández; Irma González, daughter of René González; Tony Woodley, Unite union in the UK; Andrew Stern, president emeritus of SEIU; translator.

## Steelworkers host meeting

**Continued from front page**

and conspiracy to do so, the use of fraudulent identities and documentation, and conspiracy to commit espionage. Hernández was also charged with "conspiracy to commit murder," for which he was given one of his two life sentences.

Known internationally as the Cuban Five, they had been gathering information on right-wing Cuban exile groups in Florida that had a history of carrying out violent attacks against Cuba.

Hernández was recently held in the "hole" at the U.S. maximum security penitentiary in Victorville, California, for 13 days in atrocious conditions. He was put in the tiny cell just one day after doctors said he needed medical treatment. The cell had no air conditioning and poor air circulation as outside temperatures reached more than 100 degrees.

Adriana Pérez, who is married to Hernández, told the crowd he would have been held there in inhumane conditions "indefinitely" if it had not been for the international protests that forced the prison authorities to release him back into the general prison population August 3.

The U.S. government has refused to allow Pérez to visit Hernández since his imprisonment. In 2002, after be-

ing granted a visa and flying to Houston, she was stopped, detained, and interrogated for 11 hours, and forced to return to Cuba.

Olga Salanueva also spoke. She has not seen her husband René González since August 2000, when she was arrested in Miami and taken to see him on her way to jail. By arresting Salanueva the cops hoped to pressure González into signing a confession and testifying against the other defendants. He refused.

Salanueva was jailed for three months and deported six days before the trial of the five began. In July 2008, officials at the U.S. Interests Section in Havana told Salanueva she is "permanently ineligible" for a visa.

Irma González, the daughter of Salanueva and René González, also spoke.

Tony Woodley, joint general secretary of Unite, the largest union in the United Kingdom, said it was "scandalous" that Salanueva and Pérez have been denied visas to visit their husbands for the 12 years they have been held in jail. "We need to raise the game to get the Cuban Five freed," he said. Woodley was introduced by Andrew Stern, president emeritus of the Service Employees International Union.

Ken Neumann, national director of the United Steelworkers of Canada, said that it was a "joint priority" of the Steelworkers and Unite to win the release of the Cuban Five.

Jack Layton, leader of the New Democratic Party (NDP) in Canada, pledged his support to the families and said the NDP "commits itself to raising consciousness about the Cuban Five."

On September 12 the Toronto Forum on Cuba will host another solidarity event called "12 Years of Injustice: Free the Cuban Five," which will include family members of the five, lawyer Leonard Weinglass, and, via live broadcast from Puerto Rico, Rafael Cancel Miranda, Puerto Rican independence fighter who spent 27 years in U.S. prisons. Contact torontoforumoncuba@rogers.com for more information on this event.

*Seth Galinsky contributed to this article*

### Write to the Cuban Five

**Fernando González (Rubén Campa)**

Reg. #58733-004, FCI Terre Haute  
P.O. Box 33, Terre Haute, IN 47808  
(Note: address envelope to "Rubén Campa")

**René González**

Reg. #58738-004, FCI Marianna  
P.O. Box 7007, Marianna, FL 32447-7007

**Antonio Guerrero**

Reg. #58741-004, FCI Florence  
P.O. Box 6000, Florence, CO 81226

**Gerardo Hernández**

Reg. #58739-004, U.S.P. Victorville  
P.O. Box 5300, Adelanto, CA 92301

**Ramón Labañino (Luis Medina)**

Reg. #58734-004, FCI Jesup  
2680 301 South, Jesup, GA 31599  
(Note: address envelope to "Luis Medina")



# Trotsky answers charges from 1930s ‘Moscow Trials’

*Below is an excerpt from The Case of Leon Trotsky, one of Pathfinder's Books of the Month for August. It contains the transcript of the April 1937 hearings held by the Preliminary Commission of Inquiry into the Charges Made Against Leon Trotsky in the Moscow Trials, also known as the Dewey Commission. Central leaders of the 1917 Russian Revolution were framed up and sentenced to death through these trials, which were staged by the Joseph Stalin regime in the Soviet Union in the mid-1930s. Though in exile Trotsky was one of the chief defendants. In answering a broad range of questions before the commission, Trotsky discussed his role in leading the fight to continue Lenin's internationalist course in the revolution. The commission was chaired by John Dewey, professor emeritus of philosophy at Columbia University. Albert Goldman, a labor at-*

## BOOKS OF THE MONTH

*torney, acted as counsel for Trotsky. The excerpt is from the commission's ninth session. Copyright © 1965. Reprinted by permission of Pathfinder Press.*

GOLDMAN: Will you state, Mr. Trotsky, what basic principles determined the foreign policy of the Soviet Union during the time when Lenin and you played



Drawing of Dewey Commission, 1937, by Dorothy Eisner. Leon Trotsky is speaking. Mexican painter Diego Rivera is at bottom right. Dewey is at top, second from left.

leading roles in guiding the destiny of the Soviet Union?

TROTSKY: We considered the Soviet Union as a part of the world revolutionary movement of the working class. We considered it our duty to take every measure which could save and preserve the Soviet Union. We considered that the revolutionary movement in every country—that its success would best guarantee the stability of the Soviet Union. We never tried to submit the revolutionary movement in any country to the specific interests of the Soviet Union, because such a submission signifies the weakening of the workers' movement in that country—in all countries. Our doctrines, in our opinion, coincided totally with the independent revolutionary development of the proletariat across the world. I can remember—it was in 1922, in the last year of Lenin's active life—when Zinoviev and Bukharin—more Zinoviev—directed by mere organizational narrowness, tried to revise the leadership of certain countries by measures of pressure from above. Lenin wrote then—this letter is published: “By such measures you will make only a selection of docile and stupid people. That is not what we want in the C.I. [Communist International], docile and stupid people.” I regret it very much, but I am obliged to say that this selection has since made very great progress, because the method of pressure from Moscow, of replacing all leaders in the conjunctural

interests of the Moscow bureaucracy, became the rule.

GOLDMAN: In what way has the foreign policy, in your opinion, changed since Stalin has assumed control?

TROTSKY: The first thing which was proclaimed was the theory of “Socialism in one country.” The posing of “Socialism in one country” signifies that all the other sections lose for a long period, an indeterminate period, their independent role. They represent now only the “guard” of the Soviet Union. “Socialism” is applied in the Soviet Union independent of the happenings in the world.

We see now the struggle with fascism in Spain, fascism in Germany, fascism in Austria and Italy, but the Socialist bureaucracy says that the revolution progresses in the Soviet Union. In our Marxist eyes, the reaction in the Soviet Union is only a part of this tremendous world-reaction. If this world-reaction continues as now, the Soviet Union as a Soviet proletarian state is doomed.

GOLDMAN: Did you ever believe that the Soviet Union should send the Red Army into other countries for the purpose of overthrowing the rule of the capitalist classes?

TROTSKY: In such an abstract form, it is difficult to answer. It is possible to imagine a situation where civil war is developing in one country. The proletariat creates one government, and the fascists another government. Then the government of the proletariat appeals to

the Soviet Government for aid. Naturally, I will not refuse if I can. Imagine the situation in Spain. And Spain, imagine, is a neighboring country of the Soviet Union. Caballero appeals to us for help. It would be the elementary duty—as during a strike it is the duty of the trade unionists in every country to help the strike, the same duty it is to help by military force if it is not imposed on them and if they themselves ask for the aid.

GOLDMAN: But assuming there is no dual power in a country. Assuming that the proletariat does not attempt to take power. Did you ever believe or advocate the idea that the Red Army should be sent into other countries?

TROTSKY: A revolution by the Red Army would be the worst adventurism. To try to impose revolution on other people by the Red Army would be adventurism.

GOLDMAN: When you were one of the leading figures of the Soviet Union, did you ever advocate this idea: That the Soviet Union should have no political or economic relations with the capitalist world?

TROTSKY: Never.

GOLDMAN: What was your general conception with reference to that problem?

TROTSKY: It is unfortunately a question dealing with an objective situation we cannot escape. It would be the same as if I said I would not use a train because the owner is a capitalist. You cannot wait for the moment of the proletarian dictatorship to use the train. The same rule—from all sides we are surrounded by capitalist countries. We must buy and we must sell. We must have the possibility of sending our citizens to other countries to learn, to buy and sell. We must have relations, economic, political and diplomatic relations, with them. It is absolutely natural. I give a better example: It would be the same if the trade unions should cease or refuse any conversations with the boss. It is impossible. We were, in our opinion, a trade union which became the state. The other states are the bosses, and we must have conversations with them. It is absolutely necessary, even, to make concessions to them, as workers make concessions to their bosses after a strike has not succeeded. We are the only workers' state in the world, surrounded by hostile capitalist nations.

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# Workers told to accept ‘new normal’

The capitalist rulers have firmly in their sights the living conditions and rights of working people as the worldwide economic depression grinds on. Many articles in the *Militant* this week provide evidence of that. Private employers and the government are cutting pay, jobless workers can no longer count on unemployment benefits, and essential services workers rely on are on the chopping block.

The aim of the bosses and their government is to make working people pay for *their* crisis. In so doing they try to convince us that the conditions they are imposing on the working class, along with their incessant wars abroad, are simply the “new normal.” We are told to get used to it, rather than resist.

At the same time workers are supposed to accept fewer constitutional protections against government encroachment on our lives in the interests of “fighting terrorism.” The decision by the Barack Obama administration to publicly order the assassination of Anwar al-Awlaki—and to step up government spying of e-mail and phone communications, bank records, and even what books you take

out from the library—are dangerous precedents aimed at much broader curtailment of the rights of all working people.

Working people can no more accept the U.S. government being judge, jury, and executioner of anyone they dub a terrorist, than we can accept cops doing the same on the streets of Harlem when they respond with a barrage of bullets to youths involved in a street fight. These outrages are directed at working people as a whole, not just their momentary targets.

Supporting the socialist campaign in this year’s elections is one way for workers to respond to the assaults on our class. Socialist Workers Party candidates are joining the struggles of workers and farmers to defend themselves, while pointing out that working people need to break from the Democratic and Republican parties and chart a course toward independent working-class politics by building our own labor party that can challenge the political power of the capitalists. That is a road forward for workers to discuss and act on in the fight against the “new normal.”

## Police shooting rampage in Harlem

**Continued from front page**

referring to the shootings of Amadou Diallo and Sean Bell, both of whom were killed in the city in similar fashion by New York police officers.

The cops “seem to have their minds made up when they come into this area,” Janna Rojas, another Harlem resident, told the *Militant*.

Eyewitnesses to the shootings say Alvarez, 23, and Soto, 21, were involved in a scuffle at a block party on 143rd Street near Lenox Avenue. Accounts by police and witnesses of what followed vary. Some neighborhood residents say the police converged on the two men and fired without warning.

The police story, which has changed since the shootings first happened, claims Alvarez wrestled a gun away from Soto and then began firing at police. Four of the 50 bullets fired that morning reportedly came from that gun. At the end of the incident Soto,

who was shot five times, lay dead. He was killed by a police bullet, according to ballistics test results reported in the media. Alvarez was left in critical condition, shot 21 times.

Rene Leon, a cousin of Luis Soto, told this reporter after the Harlem meeting: “Every day of our lives we get harassed by the cops.”

The cops and media immediately began a campaign impugning the character of Soto and Alvarez, with reports of their criminal records, and by publicizing the contents of searches of their homes to imply further criminal activity.

The Socialist Workers campaign of Róger Calero, candidate for U.S. Congress in District 15, which includes Harlem, issued a statement immediately after the shootings condemning the police actions and calling for the arrest, prosecution, and punishment of the cops involved.

## Restrictions eased on U.S. air strikes

**Continued from front page**

publicly because of “operational security.”

Since “some civilian casualties result from a misunderstanding or ignorance of local customs and behaviors,” stated Petraeus, all U.S. patrols and operations must include Afghan forces.

With little to show for its counterinsurgency efforts, Washington has been placing greater emphasis on “targeted killings,” noted the *New York Times*. Over the last five months “commando raids” have taken “more than 130 significant insurgents out of action,” the *Times* said.

The last of the 30,000 additional U.S. troops President Barack Obama ordered to Afghanistan last December are scheduled to arrive by the end of August. There are now 98,000 U.S. troops on the ground. Combined with NATO troops, nearly 150,000 soldiers are deployed in Afghanistan.

The rising numbers of U.S. and NATO troops, however, are making little progress in beating the Taliban and winning support from Afghan working people.

“A senior NATO official said one-third to one-half of the 82 districts around the country that NATO considers crucial to the war are now under insurgent influence,” reported the *Washington Post*. The number of Taliban fighters exceeds 30,000, according to U.S. and Afghan officials.

**Air strikes kill dozens of civilians**

A few days after Petraeus issued his war directives, at least a dozen civilians were killed in air strikes in Nangarhar Province in eastern Afghanistan. According to the *New York Times*, local residents said that the attack took place August 5 at 4:00 a.m. on “a house in Nakrro Khail and at a ford in Hashim Khail Wadi, where vehicles were blocked by a flood and the driv-

ers had parked, waiting to cross.”

A total of 26 people were killed in the two air strikes, Mohammad Hassan, district chief of Khogyani district in Nangarhar, told Agence France-Presse. Less than two weeks earlier rocket strikes in Sangin district of Helmand Province killed dozens of civilians in a house where people had taken refuge from fighting between Taliban and U.S.-led forces. Hundreds of Afghans marched in Kabul to protest this attack.

According to the United Nations, almost 2,500 civilians were killed in Afghanistan last year by both sides, the highest number since Washington’s invasion in 2001.

Meanwhile, relations between Washington and the Afghan government continue to be fraught with tensions. President Hamid Karzai moved August 4 to assert control over two U.S.-backed task forces aimed at investigating government corruption. In response to the arrest of Mohammed Zia Saleh, who headed the administration of Afghanistan’s National Security Council, Karzai moved to investigate the investigators, charging they violated the country’s sovereignty.

Because of the government’s actions, a U.S. Congressional panel is withholding approval of the Obama administration’s request for \$4 billion in nonmilitary aid to Afghanistan.

In another development, Pakistani president Asif Ali Zardari told *Le Monde*, a French daily, that the U.S.-led forces “have lost the battle for hearts and minds” in Afghanistan and “is in the process of losing the war against the Taliban.” The comments were published August 3, five days after Karzai called upon U.S. forces to put more emphasis on targeting “sanctuaries” and “training places of terrorism” outside Afghanistan.

## Bosses cut wages

**Continued from front page**

tracts were revised to include pay and benefit cuts in 22 percent of the cases.

New York governor David Paterson is seeking to cut most state workers’ wages by 4 percent. New Orleans city employees’ pay was reduced by 10 percent in July, and the mayor told some workers they cannot work a second job to make up for the income lost. State employees in Tennessee have not had a pay raise since 2007 and the governor is now pursuing a 5 percent wage cut.

Even oil cleanup workers in the Gulf of Mexico are affected. Plant Performance Services, a contractor hired to organize some of the cleanup of the BP oil disaster, is cutting hourly wages between \$4 and \$10, claiming there is less oil coming ashore. Cleanup workers currently make between \$18 and \$32 per hour based on their training.

According to the Bureau of Labor Statistics, wages have remained largely the same for the past year and a half. Many companies are counting on high unemployment to pressure workers to accept lower wages or forgo raises.

Sub-Zero, a refrigerator and freezer manufacturer, threatened 500 workers in Wisconsin with plant closure unless they accepted a 20 percent cut in wages and benefits. In April Arandell, the second-largest commercial printer in that state, enacted an across-the-board 21 percent pay cut for all 600 union employees. ABF Freight System, a large trucking company, has put a 15 percent wage reduction before the Teamster-organized workforce there.

State governments are also increasing retirement ages. This year 10 state legislatures voted to require new government employees to work longer before they can retire with a full pension. Two other states, California and Mississippi, have similar laws pending.

In Illinois new workers will retire at 67 years, up from 60; in Utah new state employees have to work 35 years instead of 30; in Missouri the retirement age has increased to 67 with 10 years of service, up from 62 with five years of service.

These moves are leading to discussions in Washington about raising the eligible age for Social Security benefits. Currently for those born in 1960 or later the age is 67. Both Democrats and Republicans are discussing a raise to 70 years.

**Some workers fight back**

While many workers have accepted pay cuts with little complaint because of the tight job market, others are refusing to buckle under, especially when a company is making huge profits.

Members of Retail, Wholesale and Department Store Workers Union Local 220 in Williamson, New York, went on strike against Mott’s May 23 after the company instituted a \$1.50 pay cut. The company is running the plant, which produces applesauce and juice products, with temporary workers. Of the 305 workers on strike, only eight have returned to work, according to the union.

The Rochester-area company, a subsidiary of Dr Pepper Snapple Group, reported profits of \$550 million last year.

Company spokesmen justify the cut based on the going rate for wages in the area. “We pay folks based on what the market will bear and as we look in the Rochester area, we were a bit out of line with that,” Lain Hancock told YNN, a local Rochester TV news station.

In addition to wage cuts, Mott’s is looking to reduce the company’s 401(k) contribution, increase employee payments for health insurance, and eliminate pensions for new employees.

The strike at Mott’s has won support from the United Food and Commercial Workers union. New York attorney general Andrew Cuomo and the New York City Council have asked the company to negotiate with the union. So far the bosses have refused.

In an interview with the *Militant*, Bruce Beal, Local 220 recording secretary, said the union has received tremendous support from the community and “the tone and attitude on the picket line is strong.”

“This strike is not just about 300 workers in Williamson, New York,” he said. “All blue collar workers, whether union or nonunion, have to stick together and fight corporate greed.”